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Viewing cable 06MEXICO5210, PROTEST CAMPS TO BE LIFTED; NEW PHASE FOR CIVIL

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MEXICO5210	2006-09-13 17:13	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Mexico

Appears in these articles:

<http://wikileaks.jornada.com.mx/notas/eu-siguio-con-lupa-la-movilizacion-poselectoral>

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PP RUEHCD RUEHGD RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRS RUEHTM
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ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 131713Z SEP 06
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3205
INFO RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USNORTHCOM PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHLA/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY PRIORITY

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2006-09-13 17:13:00
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Embassy Mexico
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 005210

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: PROTEST CAMPS TO BE LIFTED; NEW PHASE FOR CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT
REF: MEXICO 4987

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER-COUNSELOR CHARLES V. BARCLAY, REASONS
: 1.4(B/D).

11. (C) Summary: Developments unfolding this week, and conversations with PRD and GDF (city government) insiders, provide ample indication that backers of defeated PRD Presidential candidate Andres Lopez Obrador will dismantle their six week old occupation of Mexico City's central square Zocalo and main thoroughfare, allowing the annual independence day parade by the military to proceed as usual and reducing the short term potential for violence. While both AMLO and President Fox continue to insist they will each offer an Independence Day "grito" in the Zocalo on the evening of September 15, the GDF is working behind the scenes to resolve the impasse. PRD contacts told us that the encampments are unlikely to be reinstated, but noted that their Party and AMLO's grass roots supporters are determined to take their civil disobedience campaign to a new phase, which will be announced at the National Democratic Convention (NDC) on September 16. End summary.

A Cry in the Night...or Two?

12. (C) A day after announcing his intention to dismantle the occupation of Paseo de la Reforma and Zocalo prior to the parade on September 16, AMLO reaffirmed his desire to give his own "grito" (annual speech commemorating the launch of Mexico's independence movement) to supporters in the Zocalo, the evening before. AMLO is clearly seeking another opportunity to rattle Fox by upstaging the president's traditional address to the nation. GDF Secretary of Government Ricardo Ruiz Suarez told poloffs that city government is working to find a face-saving solution, and that both Fox and AMLO would welcome one despite their hard-line public posturing. However, Ruiz noted that the president may not be willing to cede his place to AMLO after being prevented from delivering his annual report to Congress on September 1 (reftel). On September 12, the presidential spokesman reaffirmed Fox's desire to speak there, and essentially told AMLO to "bring it on" by noting that any citizen has the right to express himself in Mexico's main square and saying he saw no conflict.

13. (C) Unless the competing events are staged carefully, say local press sources, there will be an unruly "grito duel" between Fox and AMLO, with the latter's improvised stands at least partially blocking the view of the balcony from which Fox will speak and crowds of opposition supporters shouting insults while the president speaks. PRD Deputy Juan Jose Garcia Ochoa told poloff he believes a compromise in which Fox and AMLO deliver their gritos at different times in the Zocalo is possible. Deputy Cuauhtemoc Sandoval was less optimistic. However, while concerns remain that the grito will be a noisy and embarrassing occasion for President Fox, most here are confident that the annual military parade on September 16 -- by far the greater concern last week -- will

proceed uneventfully. Moreover, most here believe that the complicated logistics of dismantling the tent camps, staging the parade and setting up for the subsequent NDC can be managed.

A New Phase of the Civil Resistance Campaign?

14. (C) According to both Garcia Ochoa and Sandoval, there is little chance that the unpopular occupation of Reforma would be reinstalled after the military parade, and the PRD is seeking to move on to a new phase of the civil disobedience campaign, ushered in by the NDC on September 16. Ruiz said he too doubted the protesters would seek to reoccupy Reforma after the parade. Key AMLO ally Manuel Camacho Solis echoed these thoughts in a September 11 radio interview, saying it "wouldn't be convenient to reinstall the camps," and that "all of our energy will be put into the NDC." As Garcia Ochoa explained, the NDC will identify a greater role for PRD elected officials (i.e. legislators and governors) in the movement, "to put a limit on what Calderon's Administration can do." He said the encampments were about seeking a recount, whereas the NDC will be about seeking institutional reform. A leader of PRD party ally, Convergencia Democratica, echoed these sentiments saying the Mexican left will do everything it can, within Mexico's institutions and through

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the NDC, to hold Calderon's feet to the fire before the December 1 inauguration and test his willingness to undertake fundamental reforms. In recent days, AMLO has spoken of a new "Magna Carta" for Mexico, and of inaugurating a "Mirror Cabinet" to advance his reform agenda. NDC delegates will be asked to vote on whether AMLO should be declared the "legitimate president" of Mexico, the head of a resistance government, or the leader/coordinator of a peaceful resistance movement. According to Garcia Ochoa, there are already some 500,000 delegates registered for the September 16 event.

15. (C) Comment: The PRD is clearly seeking a graceful end to the unpopular occupation of Reforma. A reoccupation after the parade is unlikely, even if it cannot be ruled out entirely. Whether the party and its allies use other forms of disruptive civil disobedience to advance their agenda remains to be seen. AMLO repeatedly has shown an impressive ability to turn out the masses. The turnout at the September 16 NDC may provide our first clue as to how much energy remains in this movement.

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GARZA